

## **10 The review visit**

### **10.1 Status of the visit**

At an early stage, institutions will have decided to apply for one of the services offered by MusiQuE. They should therefore be familiar with, and accepting of, the standards and procedures that are applicable to that specific service.

Reviewers will carry out reviews in accordance with the relevant standards and procedures, and will explore the compliance of the institution/programme/joint programme with each standard. The work of the Review Team should be seen as a peer-led quality enhancement process; MusiQuE Teams will focus on providing advice and suggestions to the institution for its improvement and further development, even where this is done within a framework of formal recommendations concerning accreditation.

### **10.2 Aim and focus**

The main aim of the visit is for the Review Team to collect evidence and information on the various areas of enquiry and criteria in order to complete and, where appropriate, to verify the picture of the institution/programme as described in the self-evaluation report and in the supporting materials. Thus, the external perspective brought in by the Review Team, and informed by its expertise and international experience, takes as its point of departure the internal perspective as expressed in the self-evaluation report.

More specifically, the visit will give the Review Team a unique opportunity to gain an understanding of the specificities of the institution/programme as these are experienced 'on the ground', and of the extent to which there is consistency between these and the way in which the institution presents itself. In addition, the Review Team will be able to explore whether, how and with what results the institution's strategic policies and procedures for quality enhancement are implemented throughout the institution – and, indeed, have the desired impact. Both of these foci are equally important. All the scheduled encounters should aim at exploring issues that, in one way or another, have a direct bearing on them.

### **10.3 Duration**

The visit will normally last at least 1.5 days for a programme review and at least 2.5 days for an institutional review (subject to variation depending on the circumstances).

### **10.4 Briefing sessions during reviews**

A briefing session takes place at the beginning of the very first Review Team meeting. It is the responsibility of the secretary to explain the background of the procedure (mission and vision of MusiQuE, aims of the MusiQuE reviews), the expectations of the institution, as well as the role of peer-reviewers. The secretary will take the Review Team members through the review procedure and standards being applied, remind them of the Code of Conduct and deal with any questions they may have. At the end of the session he/she will ask all reviewers to confirm that they have a full understanding of the procedure about to be embarked upon and of their role within it.

### **10.5 Programme and itinerary**

Elements to be included in the programme of a review visit are listed below:

**Compulsory items:**

- Meeting with the head of institution and institutional/departmental/programme leaders
- Meeting with the Chair and/or a member of the relevant Board/Council (e.g. Academic Council, Conservatory Council)
- Meeting with artistic and academic members of staff (professors and teachers)
- Meeting with senior administrative officers (responsible for quality assurance and enhancement, the international office, financial services, the alumni office, the planning unit, co-ordination of artistic and research activities, public relations, etc.)
- Meeting with students representing all study cycles and different levels and subjects (including, where relevant, a representative of the student union/council)
- Meeting with former students
- Meeting with representatives of the profession (employers, organisation representatives, etc.) from the region
- Review of facilities (studios, concert venues, practice facilities, libraries, etc.)
- Review of assessed student works such as concert recordings, compositions and final papers to consider the standard and modes of assessment and the learning achievements of students
- Attendance at concerts or other public presentations of students' work and/or visits to classes delivered at the time of the review
- Plenary meetings of the Review Team (including one for the preparation of the report).
- Feedback by the Review Team to the institution/programme at the end of the visit. It is recommended that this session be open to any student, staff member or person linked with the institution, who wishes to attend.

**Recommended items:**

- Attendance at performance examinations including the follow-up discussion by the examination committees.

The institution may combine the personnel of meetings for the sake of efficiency –for instance, representatives of the profession and former students, or students and former students.

Conflicts of interest should be avoided so, for example, members of staff should not be met by the Review Team together with current students; members of the leadership team should not be met together with representatives of the profession, etc.

A template has been designed for the typical programme of a MusiQuE review visit (see <http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/templates>).

The final programme and itinerary should be negotiated and agreed between the Review Team, through its secretary, and the institution. The proposed programme will be sent to the Review Team through its secretary and any further adjustments will be agreed with the institution if needed. Other than small adjustments to take account of unavoidable changes in availability, the schedule should be fixed a minimum of four weeks before the date of commencement of the visit.

Once the programme and itinerary have been agreed, the institution will be asked to confirm the names and functions of all the personnel that the Review Team will meet.

The Review Team will not be able to examine every aspect of the institution. The itinerary should therefore be designed to give the Review Team as full a picture as possible of the institution and/or the specific programme(s). Special emphasis should be given to strategies and measures adopted to enhance the quality and relevance of the study programme(s).

### **10.5.1 Meetings**

- **Length of the meetings:** Most meetings should last between 60 and 90 minutes. Initial and final meetings with the leadership may be extended. Visits to classes will normally not last longer than 30 minutes. Adjustments will be made to the length of the session in cases where translation is provided.
- **Scope of meetings:** The meetings will be chaired by a designated member of the Review Team. After introductions, the Chair will inform the participating staff and/or students of the main areas of enquiry for that meeting.
- **Participants in meetings:** The institution should select participants who are able to speak and discuss with authority on the areas of enquiry relevant to the meeting. The number of participants in each meeting should normally be between 5 – 12 persons for a 90 minute meeting. Representatives of the management should only be present in those meetings indicated for that purpose on the schedule.
- **Language:** Except in rare cases, the language of the review will be English. Key documents provided by the institution or, at least, crucial sections of longer documents should be available in English and, where necessary, should be translated to a professional standard.

Meetings during the review visit will normally be conducted in English. However, it is essential that institutional representatives have the opportunity to express themselves accurately and with confidence during the review visit, and this will often mean doing so in the language of the country where the review is being conducted. If the experts are not conversant with this national language, appropriate translation arrangements should be decided in advance.

Institutions expecting much of the discussion during the review visit to be conducted other than in English will normally be asked to hire a professional interpreter – acquainted with the music field – in order to provide experts who are unfamiliar with the language with the best possible real-time translation of what is being said.

In some special cases (where there is cooperation with national agencies, etc.) another language than English may be agreed upon for the whole procedure (preparation and coordination, self-evaluation report, site-visit and final report).

- **Reflection/discussion time for the Review Team:** The Review Team will hold several meetings on its own. It will commence with a two-hour initial preparatory session and there will normally be a summary meeting towards the end of the review during which the Review Team will prepare initial feedback to the institution along with the final report.

The itinerary should permit the Review Team to meet on its own between meetings. It might allow 15 to 30 minutes for this purpose or it might leave a more extended period of time after every two meetings. The Review Team might also reserve lunch breaks for further meetings of this nature. There will be a summary meeting of the Review Team at the end of each day.

- **Parallel meetings:** It is possible – by agreement between the Team and the institution – to run parallel meetings of sub-groups from the team with different groups of representatives of the Institution.
- **Flexibility of the schedule:** The institution is encouraged to leave one to three hours free at some point in the programme so that members of the team may explore more thoroughly specific areas, meet other representatives or visit the facilities (being guided, for example, by students).
- **Informal meetings/encounters:** The team should have the opportunity to meet informally (perhaps at dinner or lunch) with the leadership and other key members of the institution. Such encounters will underline the important concept of peer review rather than inspection. The team may also engage with students informally if, for instance, they act as guides to classes, facilities and events.
- **Concerts, recitals and visits to classes:** The institution is invited to provide the reviewers with a schedule of all the activities taking place in the institution during the timeframe in which a visit to classes is planned, such as concerts, recitals, master-classes, lessons, etc. On the basis of this schedule, reviewers will then choose the classes they wish to visit (individually or in groups, by themselves or led by students) in order to gain a fuller picture and understanding of the provision. Institutions are requested to inform all staff members about the potential visit of the reviewers.
- **Performance examinations:** If the review visit takes place during a practical examination period, the institution may provide the Review Team with the opportunity both to attend the performance part of the examination and to observe the deliberation of the jury that follows.
- **Final feedback meeting:** at this meeting, the Chair of the Review Team will present the preliminary findings of the Team and clarify the further steps of the review procedure. At this moment, the Review Team would not expect to enter in an in-depth discussion with the representatives of the institution/programme about the preliminary findings. The institution/programme is encouraged to share the findings with all interested individuals, either by inviting a wide audience to attend this final feedback meeting or through other channels.

Schedules should be drawn up in a way that minimises the risk of delay and disruption.

## 10.6 Practical issues

It is important that the Review Team be offered appropriate working conditions while working on the site.

The Review Team will need:

- A separate room for the duration of the review set up for individual work as well as for group meetings. This room should be big enough to accommodate all meetings. The Secretary should be given a copy of the room key in order to ensure that the Team's belongings are safe while the Team is away
- Appropriate refreshments (water, tea, coffee, fruit, cookies, drinks) available in the room at all times.
- Name-cards with the names of all Review Team members and of all the institution's participants.

- A computer with internet access (wireless if possible) and a printer.
- Lunches - either at a nearby restaurant (with the assurance that the lunch will be served fast) or through on-site catering in the Review Team's room. The Review Team may wish to meet on its own during lunch periods.
- A list of all classes/activities available to visit. It is recommended that each reviewer is guided in the building, perhaps by students.